

# TESTIMONY

## TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

PRESENTED BY  
PRINCESS OWANA KA'OHELELANI MAHEALANI-ROSE SALAZAR

DECEMBER 11, 1999  
KEONI HALL – EAST WEST CENTER  
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA

Ke welina mai oukou e na pua lei hiwa o Hawaii Nei. Aloha e na Kupuna, a me na Makua, a me na Opio, a me na Keiki. Good day to you, gentlemen of the U.S. Department of the Interior. My name is Owana Ka'ohelelani Mahealani-rose Salazar. I am a descendant cousin of Her Majesty Queen Lili'uokalani, and a royal heir of the Kingdom of Hawaii. I am not here in representation of any group, organization or corporation. I am here however to continue the message passed over the generations from my ancestors since before the time of the illegal overthrow until now. It is most important that we, subjects of the Hawaiian Kingdom, in all capacities, commit ourselves to endure all that is necessary to rebuild our great nation. I want to humbly thank all who stand in the light of truth and justice.

I would like to begin by requesting that the recent testimony and exhibits, as presented by Roy Kalamaomapuana Galbraith Kawelo on my behalf, to the Hawaii Commission on Civil Rights be included in my testimony today for your documentation and records. The date of testimony was August 22, 1999 at the East West Center – University of Hawaii at Manoa. The committee chair was served by the Honorable Charles Maxwell. Thank you very much.

In 1897, America's attempt to annex Hawaii by treaty failed to pass with the required two-thirds vote of the U.S. Congress. Evidence to the non-annexation of Hawaii forms the accurate backdrop to all congressional and state legislation before and after the illegal overthrow in 1893. Most of the illegalities have been acknowledged in U.S. Public Law 103-150, the Apology Resolution. However, no apologies were made to the government of Hawaii: a

Constitutional Monarchy, its Crown Head-of-State or royal heirs. Yet, 1.8 million acres of crown and government lands were confiscated, stolen, or as it is said, ceded.

You are here to address a reconciliation process. You must understand our frustration. We have seen numerous panels come and go. From the 1970's with Senator Abereski, then it was the Native Hawaiian Study Commission. Panel after panel, hearing after hearing, study after study. The United States keeps asking us what we want and we keep answering. One may begin to wonder if you actually know what you want to do. I am afraid that the sad truth is that all these public panels and hearings only keep stalling for more decades of time, hoping we will forget, or even die out.

## **REMEDY BETWEEN PROPER PARTIES:**

Distinguished panel representing the U.S. Department of the Interior, I thank you for your time in appearing today to hear the motions of our people. However, I too must make an urgent demand for the presence of the State Department. Hawaii was never annexed. The Kingdom of Hawaii is in political exile. The United States is in violation of three treaties and international law.

I say to you today that the only entity of the United States capable of legitimately addressing wrongs committed against the Kingdom of Hawaii is the State Department. My testimony is a strong petition calling for the Honorable Secretary of State Madeline Albright.

I believe that, in earnest, we will find a way to resolve all dilemma. Because there has been no annexation, the fact arises that the Kingdom of Hawaii is in political exile. We must make unprecedented moves for remedy. The Kingdom of Hawaii must be acknowledged by all. We need to incorporate a period of transition in order to address today's issues like: land title and usage, natural resources, citizenship, military presence, education, health care, retirement, housing, etc. Further, to consider Hawaii's future as a world peace zone in the Pacific.

All people of Hawaii and the world must understand that our most cherished asset is sovereign dominion, governance over our lands and peoples. Many are the tasks and we must get on with solutions. Let us resolve our differences and proceed with the correct agency, the U.S. State Department.

## **THE NON-ANNEXATION OF HAWAII:**

In 1897, America's attempt to annex Hawaii through a treaty failed to pass with the required two-thirds vote of the U.S. Congress. Our history credits this to what is known today as the "Monster Petition" signed by over ninety percent of Hawaii's indigenous subjects of our kingdom. It was because of the 1897 petition, against annexation of Hawaii by America and for the restoration of the Hawaiian Constitutional Monarchy, Hawaii was *never* lawfully annexed by America. In spite of this, on July 7, 1898, Congress passed a joint resolution to annex Hawaii. One month later, on August 12, 1898, agents of the U.S. government staged a ceremony on the grounds of Iolani Palace. At that ceremony, an agent of the U.S. illegally ceded 1.8 million acres of crown and government lands to another agent of the U.S.

All facts surrounding the non-annexation of Hawaii now form an accurate backdrop to all congressional and state legislation since the illegal overthrow. Unmistakably, the perspective

has shifted. With this evidence, additional constitutional, civil and human rights, and international law violations have been uncovered.

This special status of *un-incorporated* verses *creeping incorporation* gives Hawaii, although in theory a state of the union, a unique and special Nation to Nation status. America's Apology Bill signed by President Clinton reaffirms our complaint of violations against Hawaii's

government of 1893, a Constitutional Monarchy. Furthermore, it makes reconciliation between Nation to Nation a positive alternative process.

## **ON THE SUBJECT OF POLITICAL STATUS:**

Today the question of Hawaii's political status is still before us even after over one hundred years. In my view, the writing is on the wall.

1. The Rice vs. Cayetano case is a detrimental distraction rooted in the Supreme Court system. A lose/lose situation is at hand here for the Native Hawaiian. However, I believe the ruling will go to Cayetano. The reason is this: If the ruling goes to Cayetano, the Native Hawaiian people will continue in the status quo. The Office of Hawaiian Affairs will be upheld under the State of Hawaii constitution and the Department of Hawaiian Homelands will continue their mandate of the 50% blood quantum per the 1920 Hawaiian Homelands Act.
2. Earlier this year, U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno and Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt appointed two federal agents: One to represent the U.S. and one to represent Native Hawaiians. Their mandate: To address political status and other ceded land issues. Where are these two men? What are their names? They should be reporting to us as they proceed. Why do we not see them?
3. For over the past twenty years, all federal funds to Native Hawaiian programs have been coat tailed to the fringes of bills for American Indians and/or Alaska Natives. S109 attempts to conclude the twenty plus-year illusions that the Native Hawaiians and the Native Americans are of the same political status.

It seems obvious that the interest of America is served by conveniently heaping the Native Hawaiians in with the American Indians and the Alaska Natives.

One look at the history of Hawaii will evidence the fact that Hawaii's indigenous people *are not* in the same category. Rather, a unique status prevails. In the past, the United States have made grave assumptions, all of which bring us here today: Assuming title to 1.8 million acres of crown and government lands; assuming territorial jurisdiction over the Kingdom of Hawaii; assuming annexation in 1898; assuming occupation of lands for military use; assuming dominion over our harbors and airspace; assuming jurisdiction over commerce and navigation. The list can go on. Most importantly, the United States and/or their agents cannot conveniently assume and appoint the political status of Hawaii's indigenous people without our express participation and consent.

In closing, I offer the following quote by W.Q. Gresham, U.S. Secretary of State in a letter to President Grover Cleveland:

“The Government of Hawaii surrendered its authority under a threat of war, until such time only as the Government of the United States, upon the facts being presented to it, should reinstate the constitutional sovereign...

“Should not the great wrong done to an... independent State by an abuse of authority of the United States be undone by restoring the legitimate government? Anything short of that will not, I respectfully submit, satisfy the demands of justice.

“Can the United States consistently insist that other nations shall respect the independence of Hawaii while not respecting it ourselves?

Our Government was the first to recognize the independence of the Islands, and it should be the last to acquire sovereignty over them  
by force and fraud.”

W.Q. Gresham, U.S. Secretary of State  
Letter to President Grover Cleveland  
Washington, October 18, 1893  
<http://hawaii-nation.org/gresham.html>

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“The indigenous Hawaiian people never directly relinquished their claims to their inherent sovereignty as a people or over their national lands to the United States, either through their monarchy or through a plebiscite or referendum”

- U.S. Public Law 103-150 (the Apology Resolution), Nov. 23, 1993  
<http://hawaii-nation.org/publawsum.html>